

of a third party payor in order to ensure reimbursement for transportation services provided by ambulances.

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23. (Amended) A system for ensuring that appropriate mileage charges are being applied to transportation services submitted for reimbursement to a [governmental or insurance entity] payor, comprising:

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cont.
a database including records each documenting transportation services provided and submitted for reimbursement, said records indicating a starting and ending point of said transportation services and a mileage purportedly travelled in providing said transportation services;

processing circuitry reviewing said records, determining from a record said starting and ending points and mileage purportedly travelled, determining [a shortest] an approved route from said starting point to said ending point, and comparing a mileage associated with said [shortest] approved route to said mileage purportedly travelled to determine if said mileage purportedly travelled is appropriate for said services.

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37. (New) The system of claim 32 wherein the payor establishing an approved route is a governmental or insurance entity.

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38. (New) The system of claim ³~~33~~ wherein said approved route is a shortest route from said starting point to said ending point.

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cont.
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39. (New) The system of claim ³~~33~~ wherein said approved route is established by the payor based upon said starting and ending points.

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C2
40. (New) The system of claim 33 wherein the payor establishing routing criteria is a governmental or insurance entity.

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~~41~~. (New) A method for controlling ambulances so as to ensure reimbursement for transportation services provided by said ambulances, comprising:

documenting needed transportation services;

generating an instruction to a vehicle to provide a transportation service, the instruction including an identification of a route to be followed by said vehicle,

wherein the route is generated in accordance with routing criteria of a third party payor in order to ensure reimbursement for transportation services provided by ambulances.

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C7 ~~42~~. (New) The method of claim 41 wherein the payor establishing routing criteria is a governmental or insurance entity.

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~~43~~. (New) A method for ensuring that appropriate mileage charges are being applied to transportation services submitted for reimbursement to a payor, comprising:

receiving documentation of transportation services provided and submitted for reimbursement, including a starting and ending point of said transportation services and a mileage purportedly travelled in providing said transportation services;

determining from the documented starting and ending points, an approved route from said starting point to said ending point, and comparing a mileage associated with said approved route to said documented mileage purportedly travelled, to determine whether said mileage purportedly travelled is appropriate for said services.

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~~44~~. (New) The method of claim ~~43~~ wherein said approved route is a shortest route from said starting point to said ending point.

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~~45~~. (New) The method of claim ~~43~~⁹ wherein said approved route is established by the payor based upon said starting and ending points.

^{Subj}
~~46~~. (New) The method of claim 43 wherein the payor establishing an approved route is a governmental or insurance entity.

47. (New) A system for controlling a vehicle to provide transportation services, comprising:

a database documenting needed transportation services;
processing circuitry performing a dispatching process without human intervention, said dispatching process including reviewing said database, identifying a need for immediate transportation service, and instructing said vehicle to provide said transportation service.

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~~48~~. (New) The system of claim ~~47~~¹³ wherein said processing circuitry further performs a monitoring process without human intervention, said monitoring process including reviewing said needed transportation services and vehicle activity information to identify transportation services which are not being adequately provided.

^{Subj}
~~49~~. (New) The system of claim 47 further comprising communication circuitry forwarding instructions produced by said dispatching process from said processing circuitry to a vehicle; ~~4~~ said communication circuitry further providing vehicle activity information relating to said vehicle to said processing circuitry for review by said monitoring process.

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~~50~~. (New) The system of claim ~~49~~¹³ wherein said processing circuitry performs multiple said dispatching processes in parallel.

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51. (New) The system of claim ~~49~~¹⁵ wherein said communications circuitry forwards instructions to a vehicle via radio communications.

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52. (New) The system of claim ~~49~~¹⁵ wherein a vehicle reports information on its activities by radio communications to said communications circuitry.

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53. (New) The system of claim ~~49~~¹⁵ wherein said communications circuitry forwards instructions to a vehicle and receives vehicle activity information from a vehicle via both ground-based radio communication and satellite-based radio communication.

Sub F3
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54. (New) The system of claim ~~49~~ wherein said communication circuitry respectively reads and writes communication request and response records in said database,

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said processing circuitry instructing a vehicle to provide services by writing a communication request in said database for later forwarding by said communication circuitry.

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55. (New) The system of claim ~~54~~¹⁹ further comprising data entry circuitry for manual operation to create a record.

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56. (New) The system of claim 55 wherein said data entry circuitry is located at a remote site in telephonic communication with said database.

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57. (New) The system of claim ~~56~~²¹ wherein said data entry circuitry includes a reader for reading information from an identification card used by a person requesting transportation services.

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58. (New) The system of claim ~~55~~⁵⁰ wherein said data entry circuitry is a touch-tone responsive telephone receiver for receiving touch-tone telephone signals and creating a record therefrom.

Sub E5
59. (New) The system of claim 49 wherein said database, said processing circuitry and said communication circuitry are located at a plurality of locations and in telephonic communication with each other.

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60. (New) The system of claim 47 wherein said vehicles are ambulances and said records including an indication of whether requested transportation services must include advanced life support facilities.

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61. (New) The system of claim 47 wherein a dispatching process instruction to a vehicle to provide said transportation service includes an identification of a route to be followed by said vehicle.

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cont.
Sub C5
62. (New) The system of claim 61 wherein said dispatching process includes selecting said route in accordance with routing criteria demanded by governmental or insurance entities.

63. (New) A system for controlling a vehicle to provide transportation services, comprising:

a database documenting needed transportation services;
processing circuitry performing a monitoring process without human intervention, said monitoring process including reviewing said needed transportation services and vehicle activity information to identify transportation services which are not being adequately provided.

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~~64~~. (New) The system of claim ~~63~~⁸⁹ further comprising communication circuitry providing vehicle activity information relating to said vehicle to said processing circuitry for review by said monitoring process.

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~~65~~. (New) The system of claim ~~63~~ wherein said processing circuitry performs multiple said monitoring processes in parallel.

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~~66~~. (New) The system of claim ~~64~~ wherein said communications circuitry forwards instructions to a vehicle via radio communications.

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~~67~~. (New) The system of claim ~~64~~ wherein a vehicle reports information on its activities by radio communications to said communications circuitry.

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~~68~~. (New) The system of claim ~~64~~ wherein said communications circuitry forwards instructions to a vehicle and receives vehicle activity information from a vehicle via both ground-based radio communication and satellite-based radio communication.

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~~69~~. (New) The system of claim ~~64~~ further comprising satellite-based vehicle tracking circuitry for tracking locations of said vehicles,

said communication circuitry being connected to said vehicle tracking circuitry for determining vehicle activities for forwarding to said monitoring circuitry.

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~~70~~. (New) The system of claim ~~69~~ wherein a request for transportation services requests a vehicle to travel to an appointed location, and

said monitoring process reviews said vehicle activities to determine whether a vehicle has arrived at or is en route to

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cont.

said appointed location in deciding whether a customer request is being adequately serviced.

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71. (New) The system of claim ³⁵70 wherein a vehicle operator manually communicates the arrival of said vehicle at said appointed location to said communication circuitry, and said monitoring process determines whether said communication has been received from the vehicle operator to determine whether a customer request is being adequately serviced.

³⁷
72. (New) The system of claim ³⁶70 wherein said vehicle includes circuitry for automatically transmitting a position of said vehicle to said communication circuitry, and said monitoring ~~process determines whether said transmitted position is similar~~ to said appointed location to determine whether a customer request is being adequately serviced.

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73. (New) The system of claim 64 wherein said communication circuitry respectively reads and writes communication request and response records in said database,

said processing circuitry instructing a vehicle to provide services by writing a communication request in said database for later forwarding by said communication circuitry, and said processing circuitry obtaining vehicle activity information by reading response records in said database.

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74. (New) The system of claim ³⁸73 further comprising data entry circuitry for manual operation to create a record.

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75. (New) The system of claim 74 wherein said data entry circuitry is located at a remote site in telephonic communication with said database.

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76. (New) The system of claim 75 wherein said data entry circuitry includes a reader for reading information from an identification card used by a person requesting transportation services.

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77. (New) The system of claim 74 wherein said data entry circuitry is a touch-tone responsive telephone receiver for receiving touch-tone telephone signals and creating a record therefrom.

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78. (New) The system of claim 64 wherein said database, said processing circuitry and said communication circuitry are located at a plurality of locations and in telephonic communication with each other.

79. (New) The system of claim 63 wherein said vehicles are ambulances and said records including an indication of whether requested transportation services must include advanced life support facilities.

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cont.
80. (New) The system of claim 63 wherein said monitoring process creates exception records in said database identifying those records which are not being adequately serviced, and said system further comprises dispatcher circuitry for operation by a human dispatcher to use the exception records to locate records which are not being adequately serviced and take action with respect to such records.

81. (New) The system of claim 63 wherein said database includes records indicating billing information associated with requested transportation services, and
said monitoring process, upon determining completion of requested services for a record, generates an invoice record in said database for billing to a customer, said invoice record including said billing information.

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82. (New) The system of claim 81 wherein said billing information includes a log of vehicle activities performed in response to a customer request.

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83. (New) The system of claim 81 wherein said billing information includes insurance information associated with a customer receiving transportation services.

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84. (New) The system of claim 81 wherein said billing information includes information on special handling provided to a customer along with transportation services.

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85. (New) The system of claim 83 wherein said vehicle activity information indicates one or more of:
whether said vehicle is moving,
the velocity of said vehicle,
whether said vehicle is braking,
fuel usage of said vehicle,
whether emergency signals of said vehicle are operating, and
whether an engine of said vehicle is idling.

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cont.
Sub #10
86. (New) The system of claim 85 wherein said monitoring process determines from said vehicle activity information whether said vehicle is being used appropriately at times when said vehicle is not delivering transportation services, and if so creates an exception record in said database identifying the vehicle which is not being used appropriately.

87. (New) The system of claim 85 wherein said monitoring process determines from said vehicle activity information whether said vehicle is stalled in traffic, and if so creates an exception record in said database identifying the vehicle which is stalled in traffic.

88. (New) The system of claim 63 wherein said processing circuit further performs a system status management process including reviewing said records and vehicle activity information to determine and predict future needs for transportation services and comparing said future needs to expected availability of transportation services to identify future times at which available transportation services will not meet predicted needs.

89. (New) The system of claim 88 wherein said system status management process creates an exception record in said database identifying future times at which available transportation services will not meet predicted needs.

90. (New) The system of claim 88 wherein said system status management process includes instructing a vehicle to pre-position to a location where said vehicle will be better able to meet predicted future needs for transportation services.

91. (New) A method for controlling a vehicle to provide transportation services comprising:
documenting needed transportation services;
performing a dispatching process without human intervention, said dispatching process including reviewing said database, identifying a need for immediate transportation service, and instructing said vehicle to provide said transportation service.

92. (New) The method of claim 91 further comprising performing a monitoring process without human intervention, said monitoring process including reviewing said needed transportation services and vehicle activity information to identify transportation services which are not being adequately provided.